As we enter another holiday season, I will be asked to talk about the importance of what we do during this time of year. If you’ve heard me speak Christmases before, you will hear somewhere within that answer, “What we do during the holidays, we do every day of the year, with the exception of toys!”

We feed, clothe, shelter, pay rent and meet other needs every day of the year. But here is another point I try to make. The Salvation Army is not here just to meet the physical needs of a person, we are here to meet the spiritual needs as well.

This year several of the Corps officers provided a prayer and blessing tree during the registration period for Christmas assistance. This prayer tree is similar to the Angel Tree but instead of gift requests families had the opportunity to write a prayer request or a blessing. In turn, we would pray for their request or give God thanks for their blessing.

Did you know our staff prays for you too? Our staff reads, prays and replies to each one of the prayer requests submitted by our donors. As you can see, we are here to provide for both the physical and spiritual needs.

Your gifts allow us to bring real hope and joy to these families. That hope being Jesus! Isn’t that what Christmas is all about? “For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Thank you for partnering with us as we bring real hope and joy to those we serve. God bless each of you and Merry Christmas.
Carrion Columbus worked for Southwestern Bell for 30 years until she retired. In the years since, she traveled and spent time with family, but after working for so many years, Columbus was not fully ready to retire.

Carrion Columbus is Texas’s Outstanding Case Manager of the Year
Dedicating her Retirement Years to Helping People Out of Homelessness

Columbus has always had a passion for helping others, was familiar with The Salvation Army and our reputation of doing the most good, she applied for a temporary Christmas position. Columbus joined the Army in October 2009 and entered data for the Angel Tree program.

Seeing her dedication and work ethic, Social Services Director Gerald Eckert reached out to her for several temporary jobs until one day he offered her a full time position as a receptionist. Since then, Columbus has served as Outreach Coordinator, Case Manager, and is currently based at the Harbor Light Center and Red Shield Lodge, connecting the men to social service programs.

In October, the Texas Homeless Network awarded Columbus with the 2015 Outstanding Case Manager of the Year award. Eckert shared, “I nominated Carrion because she has always kept her focus on the client. She listens to them, understands their point of view and responds to their needs. She was able to get 400 veterans involved with Veteran Affairs and connect them with other benefits they had earned.”

Asked why she continues to work, Columbus answered, “This job isn’t just what I do, it’s who I am. What I do is worth it because helping someone in need is always going to be worth it.”

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HOLIDAY MEALS FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED
The Salvation Army hosts Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners

Think back to Thanksgiving and Christmas last year. Who bought the food and decorations? Who prepared the meals? Who hosted the gathering?

What of this year? Are your holiday plans already confirmed? Surely they are coming down the pipeline.

We hope God has blessed you and your loved ones all year long and that the upcoming holidays will round out a successful 2015.

Now think of those who lost their job, lost a loved one, got sick or relapsed in their recovery. What of those who are trying to make ends meet but live paycheck to paycheck?

This is who we serve. The Salvation Army is here to meet the needs of those who are in the most dire straits.

We are here to help the homeless, the addicted, and the hungry. The need is year round and we serve three meals a day, every day. However, the holidays can be especially difficult for our neighbors going through tough times.

For this reason, The Salvation Army opens its doors, not only to the clients it currently serves but also to the community as a whole, to come and sit at our Thanksgiving and Christmas table and partake in a holiday meal, on us. Last year we served over 7,000 meals during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Turkey, stuffing, yams, cranberry sauce and rolls. A holiday meal worthy of any family’s table and surrounded by a community thankful for the blessing of another day.

Donate your appliances, clothing, furniture, household goods and other items to the Adult Rehabilitation Center. To schedule a pickup, call 1-800-SA-TRUCK (728-7825) or visit satruck.org.
Thank you for Supporting our Young Adult Resource Center
Connecting Homeless Young Adults to a Life Off the Streets and into Self Sufficiency

While homelessness has declined in Harris and Fort Bend counties over the past two years, it has been accompanied by a rise in youth homelessness, especially among those aging out of the foster care system. November is Homeless Youth Awareness Month and we would like to thank you for your support of The Salvation Army. Thanks to your financial contributions, we are able to provide programs like the Young Adult Resource Center (YARC).

Olivia Cymone Williams

Olivia was taken away at birth by Child Protective Services because of her mother’s addiction. In and out of foster care, she was adopted at age six but returned to foster care when she was eleven due to her behavioral issues.

Moved around from foster care to residential treatment centers, by the time she was 16, Olivia had physical assaults on her record. For her seventeenth birthday, she requested to meet her real family. Once she learned where her grandmother lived, she ran away and moved in with her. Soon after, she began acting out and ran away.

For the next two years Olivia lived under a bridge. She sold drugs and her body until she learned about YARC. She came in about a year ago and was placed into housing and connected to other programs and services.

“I recently got my first job and I’m getting my high school diploma. YARC has helped me in so many ways but the most important has been with my state of mind. I have learned to love myself and I couldn’t say that before.”

Daquam “Deiko” Taylor

Growing up Muslim, black and gay in North Carolina put a lot of stress on Deiko. He had a strained relationship with his stepfather and moved out his senior year in high school. During this time of homelessness, he received a felony for breaking into a house trying to steal food.

Things started to look up once he left for college. He graduated in 2013 with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology but was unable to secure employment due to his record. He moved to Atlanta but, again, unable to secure a job he was living at the airport. Here he met a YARC client who invited him to come to Houston. Deiko has been here for three months and recently obtained housing and found work as a bus boy.

“YARC has been my Noah’s ark in the storm. I’ve received housing and been connected to resources that have put my life on the right path. I didn’t set out to be homeless and I’m going to take every opportunity that’s made available to me so I never am again.”

Sign Up for Electricity and Be Nice

We invite you to learn more about Naughty or Nice with Reliant Secure Advantage 12 plan.
If you enroll and choose “nice,” Reliant will donate $100 to The Salvation Army and treat you to a $100 Visa gift card.

Learn how you can be nice by visiting Reliant.com/nice.
Why I Support The Salvation Army

Sharon Hadley
Former client, Sally’s House

The last chapter of my life couldn’t be “junkie”. I had been a business owner, a home owner, graduated from college, and traveled the world. These were my thoughts as I sat for the fourteenth time in a prison cell.

My life had spiraled out of control and for the last ten years I had been living on the streets, doing what I needed to get by.

Every time I was incarcerated I thought, “Next time.” Next time I’ll clean up. However, this time the prison implemented a program where the judge could shave off twenty percent of a sentence if the inmate participated in an extracurricular activity. I tried getting into any program except the drug program. Having no other option, I participated and, before I knew it, I started thinking maybe this time was the right time to make a change.

After I was released from prison, I came to Sally’s House. Here I not only found God but I obtained the skills that gave me hope that things would get better.

When I learned about tithing, I embraced that commitment. I started giving to Sally’s House during my stay there and continue to do so today, three years later. That’s what God did for me and what better place to tithe than for Sally’s House. This is God’s house and they are doing God’s work.

Support Team Make Change Happen!

The Salvation Army is proud to join the Chevron Houston Marathon’s Official Charities for 2015-2016.

The Army’s running team Make Change Happen isn’t any ordinary team. This team is made up of current and past program participants, men who are battling or have battled addiction, homelessness, or both.

They hope that by running and sharing their story, they'll encourage others to make change happen, either in their lives or in the lives of others. Join us in cheering them on. They are running for change!

You can help support the team in several ways:
1. Make a donation to The Salvation Army in honor of team Make Change Happen.
2. Learn more about our team members and share with others how The Salvation Army is helping change lives.
3. Come out to our Hoopla Station on race day, January 17, and cheer on our team.

Learn more about this effort by visiting SalvationArmyHouston.org.

Bright Futures

Save the Date

The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Houston
10th Anniversary Youth of the Year Scholarship Awards Banquet
February 10, 2016

Event Co-Chairs:
Debby Leighton and Joella Mach

Doing the Most Good

The Salvation Army of Greater Houston
713-752-0677/ main
SalvationArmyHouston.org

Our Mission: The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.